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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of pursuing and obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

The right to shoot tyrants, not deer

The Second Amendment is the guarantee of freedom

By Andrew P. Napolitano

The right of the people to keep and bear arms is an extension of the natural right to self-defense and a hallmark of personal sovereignty. It is specifically insulated from governmental interference by the Constitution and has historically been the linchpin of resistance to tyranny. Yet the progressives in both political parties stand ready to use the coercive power of the government to interfere with the exercise of that right by law-abiding persons because of the gross abuse of that right by some crazies.

When Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence that we are endowed by our Creator with certain unalienable rights, he was marrying the nation at its birth to the ancient principles of the natural law that have animated the Judeo-Christian tradition. Those principles have operated as a brake on all governments that recognize them by enunciating the concept of natural rights.

As we have been created in the image and likeness of God the Father, we are perfectly free just as He is. Thus, the natural law teaches that our freedoms are pre-political and come from our humanity and not from the government. As our humanity is ultimately divine in origin, the government, even by majority vote, cannot morally take natural rights away from us. A natural right is an area of individual human behavior — like thought, speech, worship, travel, self-defense, privacy, ownership and use of property, consensual personal intimacy — immune from government

interference and for the exercise of which we don't need the government's permission.

The essence of humanity is freedom. Government — whether voted in or thrust upon us by force — is essentially the negation of freedom. Throughout the history of the world, people have achieved freedom when those in power have begrudgingly given it up. From the assassination of Julius Caesar to King John's forced signing of the Magna Carta, from the English Civil War to the triumph of the allies at the end of World War II, from the fall of communism to the Arab Spring, governments have permitted so-called nobles and everyday folk to exercise more personal freedom as a result of their demands for it and their fighting for it. This constitutes power permitting liberty.

The American experience was the opposite. Here, each human being is sovereign, as the colonists were after the Revolution. Here, the delegation to the government of some sovereignty — the personal dominion over self — by each American permitted the government to have limited power in order to safeguard the liberties we retained. Stated differently, Americans gave up some limited personal freedom to the new government so it could have the authority and resources to protect the freedoms we retained. Individuals are sovereign in America, not the government. This constitutes liberty permitting power.

Yet we did not give up any natural rights; rather, we retained them. It is the choice of every individual whether to give them up. Neither our neighbors nor the government can make those choices for us, because we are all without the moral or legal

authority to interfere with anyone else's natural rights. Since the government derives all of its powers from the consent of the governed, and since we each lack the power to interfere with the natural rights of another, how could the government lawfully have that power? It doesn't. Were this not so, our rights would not be natural; they would be subject to the government's whims.

To assure that no government would infringe the natural rights of anyone here, the Founders incorporated Jefferson's thesis underlying the Declaration into the Constitution and, with respect to self-defense, into the Second Amendment. As recently as two years ago, the Supreme Court recognized this when it held that the right to keep and bear arms in one's home is a pre-political individual right that only sovereign Americans can surrender and that the government cannot take from us, absent our individual waiver.

The principal reason the colonists won the American Revolution is that they possessed weapons equivalent in power and precision to those of the British government. If the colonists had been limited to crossbows that they had registered with the king's government in London, while the British troops used gunpowder when they fought us here, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson would have been hanged.

We also defeated the king's soldiers because they didn't know who among us was armed, because there was no requirement of a permission slip from the government in order to exercise the right to self-defense. Today, the limitations on the power and precision of the guns we can lawfully own not only violate our natural right to self-defense and our personal

sovereignties, they assure that a tyrant can more easily disarm and overcome us.

The historical reality of the Second Amendment's protection of the right to keep and bear arms is not that it protects the right to shoot deer. It protects the right to shoot tyrants, and it protects the right to shoot at them effectively, with the same instruments they would use upon us. If the Jews in the Warsaw ghetto had had the firepower and ammunition that the Nazis had, some of Poland might have stayed free and more persons would have survived the Holocaust.

Most people in government reject natural rights and personal sovereignty. Most people in government believe that the exercise of everyone's rights is subject to the will of those in the government. Most people in government believe that they can write any law and regulate any behavior, not subject to the natural law, not subject to the sovereignty of individuals, not cognizant of history's tyrants, but subject only to what they can get away with.

Did you empower the government to impair the freedom of us all because of the mania and terror of a few?

-- *Washington Times*, January 10, 2013

Leftists dominate higher education and the media

Faculty Left:Right ratios (as of 2008) ranked from highest to lowest
English 7.4:1
Business 0.8:1

Average at less selective schools 2.7:1,
at highly selective schools 3.7:1.

National media Left:Right
ratios (as of 2007)

Executives 1.6:1

Producers 2.1:1

Working journalists 6.7:1

-- *Coming Apart* by Charles Murray, p. 370 (2012),

UK 'late' to recognize the need to tackle extremist views

The UK was late to recognise the need to tackle the extremist views behind terrorism, the foreign secretary says.

Addressing a security summit in Bahrain, Mr Hammond described countering Islamist extremism as "the great challenge of our time".

In the speech, in Manama, he said: "We in Britain, have recognised - perhaps later than we should have - that to prevail in that struggle, we have to tackle all forms of extremism, not just violent extremism."

"We have tolerated - in fact we've even celebrated in the name of multiculturalism - ideas, behaviours and institutions that have encouraged separateness of identity and intolerance of difference.

"With hindsight, we've been too tolerant of intolerance.

"Too anxious about causing offence instead of standing up for what is right and tackling head-on the radicalisers and the extremists peddling their messages of hatred and division."

He was in Bahrain to take part in a ceremony marking the start of construction of a new Royal Navy base, which will allow longer-term deployments in the Gulf.

He told BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner, referring to the Trojan Horse affair, during which it was claimed some conservative Muslim groups were attempting to take control of a number of schools in Birmingham, "We've had to learn from this about what's going on in our schools, our prisons, our mosques, our internet and make sure we address it."

-- *bbcnews.com* October 31, 2015

Jim Crow II

By Tom Biggar

Watch out for James Crow.

After the civil war, Democrats in the South were faced with a problem. A group of people (blacks) were doing something the Democrats didn't like (voting). Unfortunately, (for the Democrats) that activity was protected by the Constitution (14th and 15th Amendments). The Democrats decided that, since they couldn't ban voting, they would make it complicated and expensive. Jim Crow used poll taxes, literacy tests, and the like so that blacks would be discouraged.

Jim Crow was one of the most reprehensible actions in the Republic's history. Jim Crow was reprehensible because it was an attack on the freedom of American citizens to enjoy their rights freely and without interference from the government - a government that should have been protecting those rights, not impeding them.

Today, Democrats are faced with a problem. A group of people (gun owners) are doing something the Democrats don't like (owning guns). Unfortunately, (for the Democrats) that activity is protected by the Constitution (2nd Amendment). The Democrats have decided that, since they can't (yet) ban the activity, they will make it too complicated and expensive - ammo taxes, licensing restrictions, etc.

Welcome to Jim Crow II. Like Jim Crow I, the people doing it don't believe in the Constitution or freedom. Reviving Jim Crow shows the moral bankruptcy of the Democrat party.

When a Democrat asks me why I don't support 'reasonable' gun control, I ask them to explain why they are walking in the tracks of Jim Crow.

I don't get any good answers, but maybe I start some people thinking. Either way, we can't let ourselves be Jim Crowed into silence or submission

-- VA ALERT: VCDL Update 11/14/15

Fact checking President Obama on gun control and gun violence

By Chris Papst

WASHINGTON (WJLA) —

Thursday morning's mass shooting at a community college in Oregon shocked and saddened America. It also frustrated President Barack Obama.

"Each time we see one of these shootings, our thoughts and prayers are not enough," said the President. "It cannot be this easy for someone who wants to inflict harm on other people to get his or her hands on a gun."

The President then said this. "We know that states with the most gun laws tend to have the fewest gun deaths."

But is that true? The I-Team learned it depends on how you analyze the data. In our area, D.C. and Maryland have stricter gun laws than Virginia. But 2014 FBI crime statistics show Virginia has the lowest rate of gun murders at 2.7 per 100,000 residents. Maryland and D.C., despite tougher gun laws, have higher gun murder rates - 3.5 and 11.1 respectively.

But when analyzing President Obama's preferred metric of gun deaths, which includes suicide and accidents, Virginia has the highest rate. According to 2013 data from the Centers for Disease Control, Virginia's gun death rate stands at 10.2 per 100,000, Maryland and DC are lower at 9.7 and 8.9 respectively.

"Instead of focusing on the tool the bad person uses to commit an atrocity, we should be focusing on the individual," said Jim Snyder of the Virginia Citizens Defense League.

President Obama was right.

States with stricter gun laws tend to have lower rates of gun deaths. But they also tend to have higher rates of gun murders.

-- ABC 7 NEWS October 2, 2015

Is Barack Obama correct that mass killings don't happen in other countries?

By Keely Herring, Louis Jacobson

After a gunman killed nine worshippers in an African-American church in Charleston, S.C., President Barack Obama said, "At some point, we as a country will have to reckon with the fact that this type of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries. It doesn't happen in other places with this kind of frequency."

A flurry of PolitiFact readers wrote to us to ask us to check it out, so we asked Jaclyn Schildkraut of the State University of New York in Oswego and H. Jaymi Elsass of Texas State U., who have analyzed mass-shooting incidents from 2000 to 2014 in the U.S., Australia, Canada, China, England, Finland, France, Germany, Mexico, Norway and Switzerland. (They looked at less-developed countries, but we will exclude those since Obama specifically mentioned "advanced" countries.)

Their chart shows that the U.S. has more mass shootings -- and more people cumulatively killed or injured -- than the other 10 nations combined, partly because it has a much bigger population than all but China.

The researchers found 23 incidents of mass shootings in the other 10 countries, resulting in 200 dead and 231 wounded. In the U.S. there were 133 incidents that left 487 dead and 505 wounded.

Here are a just a few examples of mass shootings in other countries:

- In 2011, 80 people were killed in Norway when a political extremist went on a bombing and shooting rampage.
- In 2009, in Germany a teenage gunman killed 15 people.
- In 2008, in Finland a gunman shot 10 people to death.

In sum, Obama is wrong to say that "this type of mass violence does not happen in other advanced countries." Seven of the countries saw double-digit numbers of people killed in mass shootings during that period.

But the second part of Obama's claim -- that "it doesn't happen in other places with this kind of frequency" -- isn't entirely off-base.

Adjusting for the country's total population, the U.S. ranks higher than Australia, Canada, China, England, France, Germany and Mexico.

At 0.15 mass shooting fatalities per 100,000 people, the U.S.

had a lower rate than Norway (1.3), Finland (0.34) and Switzerland (1.7).

Obama claims that "it doesn't happen in other places with this kind of frequency." But in at least three countries it does.

Elsass warned PolitiFact that the database may not include every instance of mass shootings. It also doesn't include every example of mass killings -- just those committed by firearms, even though mass stabbings are not uncommon in such places as China. Finally, their database doesn't include terrorism, such as the attack in Paris on the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo.

In all likelihood, this would make the case against Obama's claim stronger.

Our ruling: on balance, we rate the claim Mostly False.

-- www.politifact.com June 22nd, 2015

Reflections on My Summer of 1965

By Oliver Stone

As summer recedes, I drift back 50 years to the summer of 1965. I lay under a mosquito net at the Free Pacific Institute, where I was a teacher in Cholon/Saigon, with a fever bordering 103/104 Fahrenheit.

It took a few miserable days to come out of it, during which time I heard about the massacres next door in Indonesia. Time magazine, my bible out there, was celebrating our victory over Communism, but I had little idea of how awful (500,000 -- 1 million) the bloodbath really was. Nothing in Vietnam at that point came close.

But it'd take 30 more years for me to learn the entire, sordid story of the CIA and other organizations' involvement in inciting this massacre. (Peter Kuznick and I studied this extraordinary period in "Untold History of the United States".) Nor did I really have an understanding of what was going on around me in Vietnam -- only that the charming, old Saigon was daily being transformed into an occupied American military zone; ugly heaps of barbed wire and checkpoints began distorting its contours.

The ignorance of youth is understandable. In older age, it's unforgivable. It tears at my heart every time I see a brilliantly-made commercial on TV selling young people on the greatness of our Armed Forces, urging them to join a fighting force that has given the world Vietnam, 2 Iraqs, an Afghanistan, dozens of covert and overt incursions in numerous countries, drone attacks, and an empire of bases

around the world. Nothing has been learned by us from our history. Our leaders, no matter how brilliant they are (the Bundys and McNamaras were brilliant), are as ignorant as I was in that summer of '65.

I know there is karma. I know it will come for our country in one form or another. It already has in some ways -- in the callousness of the majority's response to other people's suffering in wars we've needlessly begun. What is so much of this refugee problem in Europe about, but the people that we helped displace in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya-- where not too long ago Hillary Clinton celebrated the murder of Gaddafi. She boasted, "We came, we saw-- he died." How in love with ourselves we've become, as we were in Vietnam. But one day we too will suffer in ways we can't imagine.

-- Oliver Stone's Facebook Page Sept. 12, 2015

US Special Ops Forces Have Deployed in 135 Nations

By Nick Turse

You can find them in dusty, sunbaked badlands, moist tropical forests, and the salty spray of third-world littorals. Standing in judgement, buffeted by the rotor wash of a helicopter or sweltering beneath the relentless desert sun, they instruct, yell, and cajole as skinnier men playact under their watchful eyes. In many places, more than their particular brand of camouflage, better boots, and designer gear sets them apart. Their days are scented by stale sweat and gunpowder; their nights are spent in rustic locales or third-world bars.

These men -- and they are mostly men -- belong to an exclusive military fraternity that traces its heritage back to the birth of the nation. Typically, they've spent the better part of a decade as more conventional soldiers, sailors, marines, or airmen before making the cut. They belong to the Special Operations forces (SOF), America's most elite troops -- Army Green Berets and Navy SEALs, among others -- and odds are, if you throw a dart at a world map or stop a spinning globe with your index finger and don't hit water, they've been there sometime in 2015.

This year, US Special Operations forces have already deployed to 135 nations, according to Ken McGraw, a spokesman for Special Operations Command (SOCOM). That's roughly 70% of the countries on the planet. As part of a global

engagement strategy of endless hush-hush operations conducted on every continent but Antarctica, they have now eclipsed the number of special ops missions undertaken at the height of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

SOCOM's funding has more than tripled from about \$3 billion in 2001 to nearly \$10 billion in 2014 "constant dollars," according to the Government Accountability Office, not including funding from the various service branches, at around another \$8 billion annually. The number of Special Operations forces deployed overseas has nearly tripled during these same years, while SOCOM more than doubled its personnel from about 33,000 in 2001 to nearly 70,000 now.

Each day, according to SOCOM commander General Joseph Votel, approximately 11,000 special operators are deployed or stationed outside the U.S, with many more on standby, ready to respond in the event of an overseas crisis. "I think a lot of our resources are focused in Iraq and in the Middle East, in Syria for right now. I think we are increasing our focus on Eastern Europe at this time," he added. "At the same time we continue to provide some level of support on South America for Colombia and the other interests that we have down there. And then of course we're engaged out in the Pacific with a lot of our partners, reassuring them and working those relationships and maintaining our presence out there."

The elite of the elite of the special ops community is the ever-itinerant Joint Special Operations Command or JSOC, a clandestine sub-command (formerly headed by Votel) that specializes in tracking and killing suspected terrorists.

Most deployments have been training missions designed to tutor proxies and forge stronger ties with allies. "Special Operations forces provide individual-level training, unit-level training, and formal classroom training," explains SOCOM's Ken McGraw.

From 2012 to 2014 Special Operations forces carried out 500 Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) missions in as many as 67 countries each year. JCETs are officially devoted to training US forces, but they nonetheless serve as a key facet of SOCOM's global engagement strategy.

Special Operations Command Forward (SOC FWD) elements are small teams which, according to the military, "shape and coordinate special operations forces security cooperation and engagement

in support of theater special operations command, geographic combatant command, and country team goals and objectives."

SOCOM will not divulge the locations or even a simple count of its SOC FWDs for "security reasons." Open source data suggests, however, that they are clustered in favored black ops stomping grounds, including SOC FWD Pakistan, SOC FWD Yemen, and SOC FWD Lebanon, as well as SOC FWD East Africa, SOC FWD Central Africa, and SOC FWD West Africa.

"We support the geographic combatant commanders, but we are not bound by the artificial boundaries that normally define the regional areas in which they operate. So what we try to do is we try to operate across those boundaries," SOCOM's Votel told the Aspen Security Forum.

In one particular blurring of boundaries, Special Operations liaison officers (SOLOs) are embedded in at least 14 key US embassies to assist in advising the special forces in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, France, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Poland, Peru, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. The command, and especially JSOC, has also forged close ties with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the National Security Agency, among other outfits.

SOCOM will not name the 135 countries in which America's most elite forces were deployed this year, let alone disclose the nature of those operations. Most were, undoubtedly, training efforts.

These forces carry out operations almost entirely unknown to the American taxpayers, operations conducted far from the scrutiny of the media or meaningful outside oversight. SOCOM exists in a secret world of obtuse acronyms and shadowy efforts, of mystery missions kept secret from the American public, not to mention most of the citizens of the 135 nations where they've been deployed this year.

"Ultimately, the best indicator of our success will be the success of the [geographic combatant commands]," says the special ops chief, but with US setbacks in Africa Command's area of operations from Mali and Nigeria to Burkina Faso and Cameroon; in Central Command's bailiwick from Iraq and Afghanistan to Yemen and Syria; in the PACOM region vis-à-vis China; and perhaps even in the EUCOM area of operations due to Russia, it's far from clear what successes can be attributed to the ever-expanding secret operations of

America's secret military. The special ops commander seems resigned to the very real limitations of what his secretive but much-ballyhooed, highly-trained, well-funded, heavily-armed operators can do.

"We can buy space, we can buy time," says Votel, stressing that SOCOM can "play a very, very key role" in countering "violent extremism," but only up to a point - and that point seems to fall strikingly short of anything resembling victory or even significant foreign policy success. "Ultimately, you know, problems like we see in Iraq and Syria," he says, "aren't going to be resolved by us."

-- TomDispatch, 24 September 2015

Trump: Armed teachers could have stopped Oregon massacre

Washington (CNN) Donald Trump said Saturday that had teachers been armed at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon, the deadly shooting there this week would not have been as tragic.

"By the way, it was a gun-free zone," he said at a campaign event in Franklin, Tennessee. "Let me tell you, if you had a couple teachers with guns in that room, you would have been a hell of a lot better off."

Trump came out as a strong gun-rights supporter in a position paper he released last month.

"The Second Amendment to our Constitution is clear. The right of the people to keep and bear Arms shall not be infringed upon. Period," he said. Trump then recommended expanding the right to carry.

"The right of self-defense doesn't stop at the end of your driveway. That's why I have a concealed carry permit and why tens of millions of Americans do too. That permit should be valid in all 50 states," he wrote.

In July, Trump also called for an end to gun-free zones in the wake of the shooting in Chattanooga, Tennessee, that left four Marines and one sailor dead.

Trump said if he became president, he doesn't expect to halt all mass shootings because there will always be people that society can't stop.

"This isn't a gun problem, this is a mental problem," Trump told CNN's Chris Cuomo on "New Day." "It's not a question of the laws, it's really the people."

-- CNN October 4, 2015

Edward Snowden explains how to reclaim your privacy

By Micah Lee

Last month I met Edward Snowden in Moscow. Snowden's anonymity was gone; the world knew much of what he'd leaked, and that he'd been living in exile in Moscow, where he's been stranded ever since the State Department canceled his passport while he was en route to Latin America. His situation was more stable, the threats against him a bit easier to predict. So I approached my 2015 Snowden meeting with less paranoia than was warranted in 2013.

I arrived with all my important electronic gear in tow. I had powered down my smartphone and placed it in a "faraday bag" designed to block all radio emissions. This, in turn, was tucked inside my backpack next to my laptop (which I configured and hardened specifically for traveling to Russia), also powered off. Both electronic devices stored their data in encrypted form, but disk encryption isn't perfect, and leaving these in my hotel room seemed like an invitation to tampering.

In most of Snowden's interviews he speaks broadly about the importance of privacy, surveillance reform, and encryption. But he rarely has the opportunity to delve into the details and help people of all technical backgrounds understand operational security (opsec) and begin to strengthen their own security and privacy. He and I mutually agreed that our interview would focus more on nerdy computer talk and less on politics. Snowden had tweeted about the Tor anonymity system and was surprised by how many people thought it was some big government trap. He wanted to fix those kinds of misconceptions.

Micah Lee: What are some operational security practices you think everyone should adopt? Just useful stuff for average people.

Edward Snowden: [Opsec] is important even if you're not worried about the NSA. Because when you think about who the victims of surveillance are, on a day-to-day basis, you're thinking about people who are in abusive spousal relationships, you're thinking about people who are concerned about stalkers, you're thinking about children who are concerned about their parents overhearing things. It's to reclaim a level of privacy.

The first step that anyone could take is to encrypt their phone calls and their text messages. You can do that through the smartphone app Signal, by Open Whisper Systems. It's free, and

you can just download it immediately. And anybody you're talking to now, their communications, if it's intercepted, can't be read by adversaries. [*Signal is available for iOS and Android, and, unlike a lot of security tools, is very easy to use.*]

You should encrypt your hard disk, so that if your computer is stolen the information isn't obtainable to an adversary — pictures, where you live, where you work, where your kids are, where you go to school. [*I've written a guide to encrypting your disk on Windows, Mac, and Linux.*]

Use a password manager. One of the main things that gets people's private information exposed, not necessarily to the most powerful adversaries, but to the most common ones, are data dumps. Your credentials may be revealed because some service you stopped using in 2007 gets hacked, and your password that you were using for that one site also works for your Gmail account. A password manager allows you to create unique passwords for every site that are unbreakable, but you don't have the burden of memorizing them. [*The password manager KeePassX is free, open source, cross-platform, and never stores anything in the cloud.*]

The other thing there is two-factor authentication. The value of this is if someone does steal your password, or it's left or exposed somewhere ... [two-factor authentication] allows the provider to send you a secondary means of authentication — a text message or something like that. [*If you enable two-factor authentication, an attacker needs both your password as the first factor and a physical device, like your phone, as your second factor, to login to your account. Gmail, Facebook, Twitter, Dropbox, GitHub, Battle.net, and tons of other services all support two-factor authentication.*]

Lee: What do you think about Tor? Do you think that everyone should be familiar with it, or do you think that it's only a use-it-if-you-need-it thing?

Snowden: I think Tor is the most important privacy-enhancing technology project being used today. I use Tor personally all the time. We know it works from at least one anecdotal case that's fairly familiar to most people at this point. That's not to say that Tor is bulletproof. What Tor does is it provides a measure of security and allows you to disassociate your physical location. ...

But the basic idea, the concept of Tor that is so valuable, is that it's run by volunteers. Anyone can create a new node on the network, whether it's an entry node, a middle router, or an exit

point, on the basis of their willingness to accept some risk. The voluntary nature of this network means that it is survivable, it's resistant, it's flexible. [*Tor Browser is a great way to selectively use Tor to look something up and not leave a trace that you did it. It can also help bypass censorship when you're on a network where certain sites are blocked. If you want to get more involved, you can volunteer to run your own Tor node, as I do, and support the diversity of the Tor network.*]

-- theintercept.com/2015/11/12

IRS Owned Phone-Spying Technology

The IRS spent tens of thousands of dollars on controversial technology that tracks people by their cellphone, according to government documents revealed on Monday.

The heavily redacted documents obtained by The Guardian show that the tax agency spent more than \$70,000 on upgrading and training the devices — known as StingRays, IMSI-catchers or "cell site simulators" — in 2012, the newspaper reported.

The briefcase-sized devices mimic cellphone towers and pick up signals sent by people's phones to reveal their location. Those signals can include identifying information about who owns the phone and can also contain a list of people's contacts, messages or other personal content.

It remains unclear whether or how the IRS used the device.

Its name adds to a growing list of government agencies that have used the devices, much to the chagrin of civil liberties advocates.

According to the American Civil Liberties Union, a dozen other federal agencies are known to have used the technology, including the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the National Security Agency. Additionally, state or local police in 22 states and the District of Columbia have also owned the devices, according to the civil liberties groups.

Federal and local officers rarely needed to acquire a warrant to use a StingRay to track a suspect, and have maintained a vigilant secrecy surrounding their use of the devices.

In September, however, the Justice Department changed course and revealed a new policy requiring federal officials to obtain a warrant before using the technology and routinely delete the information they pick up. Some privacy advocates have nonetheless expressed

concern about the exceptions to the government's new rules.

A U.S. Marshals Service program uncovered by The Wall Street Journal last year routinely attached the devices to airplanes and picked up information from thousands of people down below.

-- The Hill, 28 October 2015

Police Civil Asset Forfeitures Exceed All Burglaries in 2014

By Martin Armstrong

Between 1989 and 2010, U.S. attorneys seized an estimated **\$12.6 billion** in asset forfeiture cases. The growth rate during that time averaged +19.4% annually. In 2010 alone, the value of assets seized grew by +52.8% from 2009 and was six times greater than the total for 1989. Then by 2014, that number had ballooned to roughly **\$4.5 billion** for the year, making this 35% of the entire number of assets collected from 1989 to 2010 in a single year. According to the FBI, the total amount of goods stolen by criminals in 2014 burglary offenses suffered an estimated \$3.9 billion in property losses. This means that the police are now taking more assets than the criminals.

The police have been violating the laws to confiscate assets all over the country. A scathing report on **California** warns of pervasive abuse by police to rob the people without proving that any crime occurred. Even **Eric Holder** came out in January suggesting reform because of the widespread abuse of the civil asset forfeiture laws by police.

Bloomberg News has reported now that Stop-and-Seize authority is turning the Police Into Self-Funding Gangs. They are simply confiscating money all under the abuse of this civil asset forfeiture where they do not have to prove you did anything. **Prosecutors** are now instructing police on how to confiscate money within the grey area of the law.

A class action lawsuit was filed against **Washington DC** where police were robbing people for as little as having \$100 in their pocket. This is getting really out of hand and it has indeed converted police into legal criminals or "gangs" as Bloomberg

News calls them.

-- armstrongeconomics.com Nov. 17, 2015

A Solution for the Same-Sex Marriage Problem

By Chuck Baldwin

Right now, the liberty movement is divided between those favoring the SCOTUS ruling legalizing same-sex marriage and those opposed (count me opposed).

Just as Roe v. Wade legalized abortion-on-demand, the Obergefell decision legalizing same-sex "marriage" was judicial activism pure and simple. There were no precedents for either decision. Think of the brilliant minds in over two thousand years of Western Civilization that somehow missed the "right" of homosexuals to "marry."

But, instead of arguing, ALL OF US in the liberty movement should promote the idea of taking marriage OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE STATE ALTOGETHER.

For over 1,800 years of Western Civilization, the state had little--if anything--to do with marriage. (In America, only the colony of Massachusetts is recorded as requiring State marriage licenses before the mid-nineteenth century.)

So, why do we even look to the state for a license to marry? The fact is, WE SHOULDN'T. All of the bickering over Obergefell only serves to ensconce the notion that the state has legitimate authority over marriage. IT DOESN'T.

In Pilgrim America and in Colonial America--and until only recently in modern America--Common Law (Natural Law) marriage was recognized as being, not only lawful, but sacrosanct. The idea of asking the state for permission to marry was as absurd as asking the state for permission to take communion or to be baptized.

Ladies and gentlemen, the only one to blame for legalizing same-sex marriage is THE CHURCH. The ultra-leftists and militant homosexuals would have had NO CHANCE of achieving victory had the churches been educating people on the historic Natural Law principles governing marriage.

I remind you Jesus said, "What

therefore God hath joined together" Only GOD can join couples in marriage.

The best that I can determine, 10 states recognize Common Law marriage today: Alabama, Colorado, Kansas, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Iowa, Montana, Texas, Utah (only after the fact) and Oklahoma.

So, including Utah, the people in ten states are free to marry WITHOUT a State license. Every freedomist should start demanding that their State legislatures once again recognize Common Law marriage.

Let the state embrace all of the perversion it wants. You can bet polygamy will be legalized next. And then what? Pedophilia? Bestiality? At some point, the sacred institutions of marriage and the Church will be forced to separate themselves from a suicidal society just as they did when the Roman Empire was collapsing.

We should marry under Natural Law (Common Law) ONLY.

Regarding the Church: it should be removed from 501c3 non-profit organization and State incorporation status. We either "come out" from this leviathan or we will be swallowed by it.

There can be no victory whatsoever by willfully surrendering the Natural Law principles upon which our convictions are predicated. Neither can there be victory by pretending that Caesar's law is Supreme Law, because it's not! There is a Court above the court. There is a King above kings. There is a Law above law.

Our founders gave their lives in order to bequeath to us a country in which we didn't have to decide between obeying God and obeying government, as this constitutional republic was designed to protect our duty to God.

Therefore, say it anyway you want, "Don't tread on me," or "We must obey God rather than men," but say it we must. And if Christian men and women cannot say it in defense of the sanctity and autonomy of marriage and the Church, they cannot say it at all.

-- Chuck@chuckbaldwinlive.com
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